

### § 3137.73

(2) List the reasons beyond your control that prevent you from performing the obligation; and

(3) State when you expect the reasons beyond your control to terminate.

(b) BLM will grant an extension of time to meet initial or continuing development obligations if we determine that—

(1) The extension encourages the greatest ultimate recovery of oil or gas or it is in the interest of conservation; and

(2) The reasons beyond your control prevent you from performing the initial or a continuing development obligation.

(c) The extension of time for performing the initial or a continuing development obligation will continue for so long as the conditions giving rise to the extension continue to exist.

### § 3137.73 What will BLM do after I submit a plan to meet continuing development obligations?

Within 30 calendar days after receiving your proposed plan, BLM will notify you in writing that we—

(a) Approved your plan;

(b) Rejected your plan and explain why. This will include an explanation of how you should correct the plan to come into compliance; or

(c) Have not acted on the plan, explaining the reasons and when you can expect a final response.

### § 3137.74 What must I do after BLM approves my continuing development obligations plan?

No later than 90 calendar days after BLM's approval of your plan submitted under 3137.71(b), you must certify to BLM that you started operations to fulfill your continuing development obligations. BLM may require you to—

(a) Supply documentation to support your certification; and

(b) Submit periodic reports that demonstrate continuing development.

### § 3137.75 May I perform additional development outside established participating areas to fulfill continuing development obligations?

You may perform additional development either within or outside a participating area, depending on the terms of the unit agreement.

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### § 3137.76 What happens if I do not meet a continuing development obligation?

(a) After you establish a participating area, if you do not meet a continuing development obligation and BLM has not granted you an extension of time to meet the obligation, the unit contracts. This means that—

(1) All areas within the unit that do not have participating areas established are eliminated from the unit. Any eliminated areas are subject to their original lease terms; and

(2) Only established participating areas, whether they are actually producing or not, remain in the unit.

(b) Units contract effective the first day of the month after the date on which the unit agreement required the continuing development obligations to begin.

(c) If you do not meet a continuing development obligation before you establish a participating area, the unit terminates (*see* § 3137.132 of this subpart).

### PARTICIPATING AREAS

### § 3137.80 What are participating areas and how do they relate to the unit agreement?

(a) Participating areas are those committed tracts or portions of those committed tracts within the unit area that contain a well meeting the productivity criteria specified in the unit agreement.

(b) You must include the proposed participating area size in the unit agreement for planning purposes and to aid in the mitigation of reasonably foreseeable and significantly adverse effects on NPR-A surface resources. The unit agreement must define the proposed participating areas. Your proposed participating area may be limited to separate producible intervals or areas.

(c) At the time you meet the productivity criteria discussed in § 3137.82 of this subpart, you must delineate those participating areas.

### § 3137.81 What is the function of a participating area?

(a) The function of a participating area is to allocate production to each